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JOHN ALBERT

SALT AND THE KISSINGER TRIP

ANNCR:

SECRETARY OF STATE HENRY KISSINGER, BOTH IN HIS OPENING STATEMENT AT HIS WEDNESDAY NEWS CONFERENCE AND IN HIS ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS, STRESSED WHY HE IS GOING TO MOSCOW TO SEEK PROGRESS IN THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS DESPITE TENSIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION OVER ANGOLA. VOA NEWS ANALYST JOHN ALBERT LOOKS AT THE KISSINGER ARGUMENTS:

VOICE:

THE SECRETARY OF STATE IS CONVINCED THAT RESTRAINT IN THE NUCLEAR RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND THE UNITED STATES IS OF SUCH MAJOR INTEREST TO BOTH, AS WELL AS TO THE WHOLE WORLD, THAT THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS CANNOT BE EASILY ABANDONED. NOR CAN THEY, IN HIS VIEW, BE REGARDED AS A ONE-SIDED FAVOR TO THE SOVIET UNION WHICH, IF DAY-BY-DAY RELATIONS DETERIORATE, ARE SIMPLY SUBJECT TO CANCELLATION.

IT FOLLOWS THAT AN UNRESTRAINED STRATEGIC ARMS RACE MUST BE PREVENTED, BECAUSE IT WOULD NEITHER GIVE ONE OF THE SUPERPOWERS LASTING STRATEGIC OR POLITICAL ADVANTAGE NOR SERVE THE INTEREST OF MANKIND AS A WHOLE. THE SECRETARY MENTIONED THE DANGERS WHICH WOULD RESULT FROM A FAILURE OF THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS. WITHOUT A NEW AGREEMENT WHEN THE INTERIM ARRANGEMENT OF 1972 LAPSES THERE WOULD BE AN END TO THE RESTRAINT ON THE BUILDING OF SOVIET NUCLEAR SUBMARINES AND NO EQUAL CEILING ON THE MISSILE FORCES OF THE TWO NATIONS. THE UNITED STATES WOULD THEREFORE FACE THE CHOICE OF NUCLEAR

INFERIORITY OR A NEW LARGE NUCLEAR BUILDUP OF ITS OWN.

SECRETARY KISSINGER COULD NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT LONG-TERM TENSIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE SOVIET UNION WOULD NOT EVENTUALLY AFFECT THE SALT-TALKS ALSO. BUT HE SEES THE OVERWHELMING NEED FOR TRYING TO SEPARATE THIS MAJOR NEGOTIATION FROM PROBLEMS OF THE DAY. HE HAS REASON TO HOPE THAT MOSCOW SHARES THIS VIEW. OTHERWISE MOSCOW WOULD NOT HAVE INVITED HIM, HE STRESSES, AND WOULD NOT HAVE GIVEN CLEAR ASSURANCES THAT IT IS READY TO MODIFY ITS SALT POSITION.

MISTER KISSINGER DOES NOT EXPECT A DRAMATIC BREAKTHROUGH IN MOSCOW, BUT A NEW AGREEMENT IN PRINCIPLE ON HOW TO HANDLE OUTSTANDING PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE NEW SOVIET BOMBER, CALLED "BACKFIRE" IN THE WEST, AND THE "CRUISE MISSILE" DEVELOPED BY THE UNITED STATES. THE UNITED STATES ITSELF HAS BEEN ABLE TO WORK OUT NEW SALT PROPOSALS WHICH HAVE, SECRETARY KISSINGER SAID, THE APPROVAL OF ALL CONCERNED, INCLUDING THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF. THUS A NEW IMPETUS COULD, DURING HIS MOSCOW TRIP, BE GIVEN TO THE GENEVA SALT NEGOTIATIONS, SO THAT THE EXPERTS COULD WORK OUT CONCRETE AGREEMENTS IN THE COURSE OF A FEW MONTHS.

THE EMPHASIS IS NOT ON AN AGREEMENT BY A CERTAIN DEADLINE, BUT ON SLOW, SOLID PROGRESS, LEADING TO AN EQUITABLE TREATY WHICH CAN BE ACCEPTED IN THIS COUNTRY BY CONGRESS AND THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THE SECRETARY REALIZES THE DIFFICULTIES OF CONDUCTING A BIPARTISAN FOREIGN POLICY IN AN ELECTION YKAR. BUT HE WOULD REGARD IT AS A TRAGEDY IF HE COULD NOT FIND IN CONGRESS SUPPORT FOR COMMON ACTION IN FOREIGN AFFAIRS. HE THINKS THE POSSIBILITY OF A SALT AGREEMENT EXISTS THAT IS

IN THE NATIONAL INTEREST OF THE UNITED STATES AND THAT AFTER DEBATE CAN FIND ACCEPTANCE BY THE CONGRESS.

IT IS CLEAR THAT THE SECRETARY OF STATE DOES NOT UNDERRATE THE DIFFICULTIES HE FACES AT HOME IN EXPLAINING ANY NEW SALT AGREEMENT AT A TIME SERIOUS DOUBTS HAVE BEEN RAISED ABOUT DETENTE IN GENERAL AND SOVIET ACTIONS IN SPECIFIC SITUATIONS SUCH AS IN ANGOLA. HE CANNOT BE SURE THAT IN THE LONG RUN THE SALT NEGOTIATIONS CAN BE SUCCESSFULLY ISOLATED FROM OVERALL TENSIONS IN THE RELATIONS WITH THE SOVIET UNION. BUT HE REGARDS THE NEED FOR NUCLEAR RESTRAINT SO OVERWHELMING THAT HE FEELS HIS MOSCOW TRIP IS FULLY JUSTIFIED.

JS/PY